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EXAMINER	
LEROUX, ETIENNE PIERRE	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2161	

DATE MAILED: 04/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/931,209	WYSS ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Etienne P LeRoux	2161	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *22 February 2005* .

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,4-8,17-21,23-34,41,43 and 46* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,4-8,17-21,23-34,41,43 and 46* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *16 August 2001* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Status of the Claims:

Claims 1, 4-8, 17-21, 23-34, 41, 43 and 46 are pending. Claims 2, 3, 9-16, 22, 35-40, 42, 44 and 45 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 4-8, 17-21, 23-34, 41, 43 and 46 are rejected as detailed below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1, 4-6, 8 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat No 5,517,405 issued to McAndrew in view of US Pat No 6,266,690 issued to Shankarappa et al (hereafter Shankarappa).

Claim 1:

McAndrew discloses:

operating a knowledge-base system [Fig 1, 40] configured to store in a database [Fig 1, 42] containing answers to questions [col 6, line 59 – col 7, line 5],

the knowledge-base system being operatively coupled to a client computer [Fig 1, 10].

forwarding the message from the client computer to a representative in response to said determining [user refers case to a more experienced reviewer such as a physician, col 8, lines 27-34]

McAndrew discloses the elements of the claimed invention as noted above but does not disclose enclosing a message identification number in a first email sent by the knowledge-base system that provides an answer to a question wherein the message identification number uniquely identifies the first email. Shankarappa discloses enclosing a message identification number in a first email sent by the system that provides an answer to a question wherein the message identification number uniquely identifies the first email [transaction ID 340, Fig 3B, col 6, line 34]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify McAndrew to include enclosing a message identification number in a first email sent by the knowledge-base system that provides an answer to a question wherein the message identification number uniquely identifies the first email based upon the disclosure of Shankarappa for the purpose of maintaining a record of the transaction between the client and the

subscriber [col 3, lines 15-28]. The skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify McAndrew per the above such that the transaction record can be used as a means for granting permission to the subscriber to customize user profile data stored by the subscriber [col 3, lines 15-30].

Furthermore, the combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa discloses receiving a second email from the client computer that includes the message identification number from the first email [Shankarappa, col 6, lines 35-40].

Furthermore, the combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa discloses determining the second email from the client computer was a reply to the first email from the knowledge-base system based on the message identification contained in the second email [Shankarappa, Fig 4A, step 412, col 8, lines 5-20].

Claim 4:

The combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa discloses wherein said forwarding includes attaching message history information [Shankarappa, Subscription Service Manager previously received a request to customize subscriber user profile data, col 3, lines 15-20]

Claim 5:

The combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa discloses the elements of claim 1 as noted above and furthermore Shankarappa discloses maintaining a communication log of communications sent and received with the knowledge-base system and wherein said determining includes ascertaining with the communication log whether a reply detection limit has been exceeded for the client computer [col 6, lines 26-44].

Claim 6:

The combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa discloses the elements of claims 1 and 5 as noted above and furthermore, Shankarappa discloses wherein the reply detection limit includes a communication interval limit of time intervals between successive communications with the client computer and a number of communications limits based on a number of communications with the client computer [col 6, lines 26-44].

Claim 8:

McAndrew '405 discloses a network [Fig 1 and col 6, line 32]

Claim 46:

The combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa discloses the elements of claim 1 as noted above and furthermore, Shankarappa discloses receiving a third email from the client after said enclosing the message identification number in the first email, determining that the third email was a new message from the client with the knowledge-base system by finding that the message identification number is absent in the third email, and generating a reply automatically to the third email with the knowledge-base system [the third email is in fact the email that is "hidden" in claim 1].

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa and further in view of US Pat No 6,630,944 issued to Kakuta et al (hereafter Kakuta).

Claim 7:

The combination of McAndrew and Shankarappa discloses the elements of claims 1 and 5 as noted above and furthermore, Shankarappa discloses an email communications log [col 6,

lines 25-48], telephone conversation [col 3, line 51] and personal conversation [col 3, line 51] but the above combination of references does not disclose a log of web chatting communications. Kakuta discloses a log of web chatting communications. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the combination of above references to include a log of web chatting communications as taught by Kakuta for the purpose of controlling the disclosure of web chatting conversations [col 6, lines 55-67]. The skilled technician would have been motivated to modify the above combination of references such that web conversations can be classified as public or private [col 6, lines 55-67].

Claims 17, 20, 24, 27, 28 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McAndrew in view of Pub No US 2005/0004889 issued to Bailey et al (hereafter Bailey).

Claim 17:

McAndrew discloses operating a system [Fig 1, 40] configured with a database [Fig 1, 42] including a plurality of question-answer sets receiving a query input to the system, the query input including a word selecting one or more of the question-answer sets with the system in response to the query input by evaluating presence of the word in one or more answers of the question-answer sets differently than presence of the word in one or more questions of the question-answer sets and providing an output from the system based on said selecting [col 6, lines 2-18, information provided in the problem statement is used to index questions or question categories maintained in a database, col 6, lines 2-18]

McAndrew discloses the essential elements of the claimed invention as noted above but does not disclose wherein said selecting includes scoring the question-answer sets to create a distribution of scores and determining with the system the query result based upon variability of the scores. Bailey discloses wherein said selecting includes scoring the question-answer sets to create a distribution of scores and determining with the system the query result based upon variability of the scores [paragraph 36]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify McAndrew to include wherein said selecting includes scoring the question-answer sets to create a distribution of scores and determining with the system the query result based upon variability of the scores as taught by Bailey for the purpose of ranking the search results by category [paragraph 36]. The skilled technician would have been motivated to modify McAndrew per the above such that the user is provided with ranked search results in order that the user is able to quickly select the most relevant search result(s).

Claim 20:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above and furthermore, McAndrew discloses a word index [col 6, lines 1-13]

Claim 24:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above and furthermore, McAndrew discloses alerting a representative when a particular one of the question-answer sets is included in the output [system refers case to a physician col 8, liners 28-37].

Claim 27:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above and furthermore, McAndrew discloses designating one or more of the question–answer sets to always appear in the output for the query input [user demographic data, defining the problem and a proposed solution, col 6, lines 47-52].

Claim 28:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above and furthermore, McAndrew discloses designating one of the question-answer sets to never appear in the output for the query input [user overrides proposed treatment, col 8, lines 1-3].

Claim 32:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above and furthermore, McAndrew discloses receiving a message from the client computer [user requests case be referred to a more experienced reviewer such as a physician, col 8, lines 27-37], determining the message from the client computer was a reply to a previously generated message [inherent because the user is on-line with an inference engine which dynamically generates questions on the basis of user's responses to previous inference questions in order to investigate a health problem and proposed solution, col 6, lines 47-58 and col 8, lines 4-17] and forwarding the message from the client computer to a representative in response to said determining [recommendation by the inference engine to refer the case to a more experienced reviewer such as a physician, col 8, lines 27-34]

Claims 18 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of Pub No US 2004/0117215 issued to Marchosky

Claim 18:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose wherein said evaluating includes weighting the answers more than the questions. Marchosky discloses wherein said evaluating includes weighting the answers more than the questions [paragraph 88]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include wherein said evaluating includes weighting the answers more than the questions as taught by Marchosky for the purpose of evaluating the answers against known diseases [paragraph 88]. The skilled technician would have been motivated to modify the above combination or references per the above such that the user's answers can be evaluated against frequently occurring known diseases.

Claim 25:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose designating corresponding weights for the word in the questions and the answers and wherein said selecting includes scoring each of the questions and the answers using the corresponding weights. Marchosky discloses designating corresponding weights for the word in the questions and the answers and wherein said selecting includes scoring each of the questions and the answers using the corresponding weights [paragraph 88]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above

combination of references to include designating corresponding weights for the word in the questions and the answers and wherein said selecting includes scoring each of the questions and the answers using the corresponding weights as taught by Marchosky for the purpose of evaluating the answers against known diseases [paragraph 88]. The skilled technician would have been motivated to modify the above combination or references per the above such that the user's answers can be evaluated against frequently occurring known diseases.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of US Pat No 6,547,727 issued to Hashiguchi et al (hereafter Hashiguchi)

Claim 19:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose wherein said evaluating includes weighting the answers more than the questions. Hashiguchi discloses weighting of questions and answers [claim 14]. It would have been obvious to the ordinarily skilled artisan to modify the above combination of references to include weighting of questions and answers so that the value of a risk of the checkup receiver's suffering from the disease can be factored in. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to improve McAndrew's invention by weighting the questions and answers to provide a health checkup supporting method [claim 14]. The skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify the above combination of references per the above such that incidence of a disease can be factored in, i.e., if the incidence of a particular disease in a particular area is very

high, then the questions regarding the disease can be weighted higher than the answers which a patient may provide [paragraph 14].

Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of US Pat No 5,870,740 issued to Rose et al (hereafter Rose).

Claim 21:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose wherein said selecting includes scoring a length of one of the questions in proportion to a length of the query input. Rose discloses scoring a length of one of the questions in proportion to a length [col 7, lines 10-30]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include scoring a length of one of the questions in proportion to a length for the purpose of adjusting the relevance ranking score of a document having a high overlap when the query is short. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify the above combination of references so that more accurate search results can be obtained for a short query [col 7, lines 10-15].

Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of US Pat No 5,278,980 issued to Pedersen et al (hereafter Pedersen).

Claim 23:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose designating one or more words to ignore. Pedersen discloses one or more words to ignore [col 11, lines 42-50]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the combination of above references to include one or more words to ignore as taught by Pedersen for the purpose of ignoring words that are not content words of a document [col 11, lines 42-50]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to improve the above combination of references so that the search can be performed expeditiously by excluding words which would cause the search engine to hang up, for example words assigned as Boolean operators i.e., AND is a stop word and would cause the search engine to produce a null result.

1. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of US Pat No 6,023,670 issued to Martino et al (hereafter Martino).

Claim 26:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose defining aliases for at least one word. Martino discloses defining aliases for at least one word [col 7, lines 17-37]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include defining aliases for at least one word as taught by Martino for the purpose of improving correlation scores [col 7, line 23]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to

improve the above combination of references so that separation between languages is improved by alias removal [col 7, line 28].

2. Claims 29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of US Pat No 6,553,364 issued to Wu (hereafter Wu).

Claim 29:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose proportionally weighting one of the question-answer sets to reduce likelihood of appearing in the output for the query input. Wu discloses proportionally weighting one of the question-answer sets to reduce likelihood of appearing in the output for the query input [col 6, lines 55-60]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include proportionally weighting one of the question-answer sets to reduce likelihood of appearing in the output for the query input as taught by Wu for the purpose of displaying documents [col 6, line 55-60]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to improve the above combination of references for the purpose of first displaying documents that are the most interest [col 6, lines 55-60].

Claim 30:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose proportionally weighting one of the question-answer sets to increase likelihood of appearing in the output for the query input. Wu discloses proportionally weighting

one of the question-answer sets to increase likelihood of appearing in the output for the query input [col 6, lines 55-60]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include proportionally weighting one of the question-answer sets to increase likelihood of appearing in the output for the query input as taught by Wu for the purpose of displaying documents [col 6, line 55-60]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify the above combination of references for the purpose of first displaying documents that are the most interest [col 6, lines 55-60].

Claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of US Pat 6,711,585 issued to Copperman et al (hereafter Copperman).

Claim 31:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claim 17 as noted above but does not disclose adding a question-answer set to the database by email. Copperman discloses adding a question-answer set to the database by email [col 40, lines 59-67]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include adding a question-answer set to the database by email as taught by Copperman for the purpose of adding taxonomy tags to the user's question [col 40, line 64]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify the above combination of references for the purpose of improving the invention by improving the

business context of the interaction by creating user profiling in order to assist with retrieval [col 40, line 59].

Claim 33 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Bailey and further in view of US Pat 6,760,727 issued to Schroeder et al (hereafter Schroeder).

Claim 33:

The combination of McAndrew and Bailey discloses the elements of claims 17 and 32 as noted above but does not disclose creating a response message based on the message from the client computer, at least one of a number of response templates and the selected one or more sets, the system being configured to store the response template each providing a different response format, and wherein said providing the output includes sending the response to the client computer. Schroeder discloses creating a response message based on the message from the client computer, at least one of a number of response templates and the selected one or more sets, the system being configured to store the response template each providing a different response format, and wherein said providing the output includes sending the response to the client computer [col 20, lines 13-30]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include creating a response message based on the message from the client computer, at least one of a number of response templates and the selected one or more sets, the system being configured to store the response template each providing a different response format, and wherein said providing the output includes sending the response to the client computer as taught by Schroeder

for the purpose of providing a database of templates configured to provide suggestions or recommendations to assist the user in making an accurate response [col 20, line 20-22]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify the above combination of references so that templates can be created to meet the needs of a particular client's business [col 20, lines 25-30].

Claim 34 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McAndrew in view of US Pat No 6,443,840 issued to Von Kohorn (hereafter Von Kohorn) and further in view of US Pat No 6,270,456 issued to Iliff (hereafter Iliff) and further in view of Bailey.

Claim 34:

McAndrew discloses operating a knowledge-base system [Fig 1, 40] configured to store a database [Fig 1, 42] formatted with a number of question-answer sets, the knowledge-base system being operatively coupled to a client computer [Fig 1, 10], receiving an input corresponding to a question from the client computer [assisting the user in making an informed decision about a problem, col 2, lines 64-67].

McAndrew fails to disclose scoring the question-answer sets with respect to the question.

Von Kohorn discloses scoring the question-answer sets with respect to the question [col 3, lines 50-65].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify McAndrew to include scoring the question-answer sets with respect to the question as disclosed by Von Kohorn for the purpose of assisting a college professor to conduct an examination [col 3, line 55]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to

improve McAndrew's invention by incorporating the above so that a college professor can set an examination procedure which requires a limited time is for responses [col 3, lines 55-65].

The combination of McAndrew and Von Kohorn disclose the limitation of the invention as noted above.

The combination of McAndrew and Von Kohorn fails to disclose determining a threshold limit based upon said scoring and selecting the question-answer sets with scores above the threshold limit.

Iliff discloses determining a threshold limit based upon said scoring and selecting the question-answer sets with scores above the threshold limit [col 17, lines 1-16].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the combination of McAndrew and Von Kohorn to include determining a threshold limit based upon said scoring and selecting the question-answer sets with scores above the threshold limit as taught by Iliff for the purpose of determining if a patient has the symptom of depression [col 17, line 16]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to improve the invention of McAndrew and Von Kohorn per the above so that a physician can use questions stored in a database to accurately determine if a patient has a particular symptom [col 17, lines 1-16].

McAndrew discloses the essential elements of the claimed invention as noted above but does not disclose wherein said selecting includes scoring the question-answer sets to create a distribution of scores and determining with the system the query result based upon variability of the scores. Bailey discloses wherein said selecting includes scoring the question-answer sets to create a distribution of scores and determining with the system the query result based upon

variability of the scores [paragraph 36]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify McAndrew to include wherein said selecting includes scoring the question-answer sets to create a distribution of scores and determining with the system the query result based upon variability of the scores as taught by Bailey for the purpose of ranking the search results by category [paragraph 36]. The skilled technician would have been motivated to modify McAndrew per the above such that the user is provided with ranked search results in order that the user is able to quickly select the most relevant search result(s).

3. Claim 41 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew and Schroeder and further in view of Pub No 2004/0220926 issued to Lamkin et al (hereafter Lamkin).

Claim 41:

McAndrew discloses means for determining a message from a client computer was a reply to a previously generated message from a FAQ [col 6, lines 5-8 describes indexing various questions or question categories which reads on FAQ] database and forwarding the message to a representative in response, means for evaluating question components and answer components of the FAQ database independently relative to an input query [col 6, lines 1-10].

McAndrew fails to disclose means for providing a response to the FAQ database query in accordance with one or more response templates, the response templates each relating to a different response format.

Schroeder discloses means for providing a response to the FAQ database query in accordance with one or more response templates, the response templates each relating to a different response format [col 20, lines 13-30].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify McAndrew to include means for providing a response to the FAQ database query in accordance with one or more response templates, the response templates each relating to a different response format as taught by Schroeder for the purpose of providing a database of templates configured to provide suggestions or recommendations to assist the user in making an accurate response [col 20, line 20-22]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to improve the invention of McAndrew so that templates can be created to meet the needs of a particular client's business [col 20, lines 25-30].

The combination of McAndrew and Schroeder discloses the essential elements of the claimed invention as noted above but fails to disclose means for selectively hiding words in the response to the FAQ database query, wherein a hidden word causes an associated question-answer entry to be always included in the response while the hidden word remains invisible in the response. Lamkin discloses means for selectively hiding words in the response to the FAQ database query, wherein a hidden word causes an associated question-answer entry to be always included in the response while the hidden word remains invisible in the response [paragraph 227]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include means for selectively hiding words in the response to the FAQ database query, wherein a hidden word causes an associated question-answer entry to be always included in the response while the hidden word remains

invisible in the response as taught by Lamkin for the purpose of providing a keyword in the header of a document such that it can be quickly and easily searched and retrieved and presented to the user [paragraph 232].

4. Claim 43 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of McAndrew, Schroeder and Lamkin and further in view of Martino.

Claim 43:

The combination of McAndrew, Schroeder and Lamkin discloses the elements of claim 41 as noted above but does not disclose defining aliases for at least one word. Martino discloses defining aliases for at least one word [col 7, lines 17-37]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination of references to include defining aliases for at least one word as taught by Martino for the purpose of improving correlation scores [col 7, line 23]. The ordinarily skilled artisan would have been motivated to improve the above combination of references so that separation between languages is improved by alias removal [col 7, line 28].

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed February 22, 2005 have been fully considered but they are now moot based on applicant's most recent claim amendments which necessitated a new search and the above new prior art rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's submission of the requirements for the joint research agreement prior art exclusion under 35 U.S.C. 103(c) on February 22, 2005, prompted the new ground(s) of rejection under 37 CFR 1.109(b) presented in this Office action. Accordingly, THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. See MPEP § 706.02(l)(3). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Etienne LeRoux whose telephone number is (571) 272-4022. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Safet Metjahic, can be reached on (571) 272-4023.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-2100.

Patent related correspondence can be forwarded via the following FAX number (703) 872-9306

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4/21/2005

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